



MAGAZINE



ART / DESIGN / MUSIC / FILM
Volume One Issue Four

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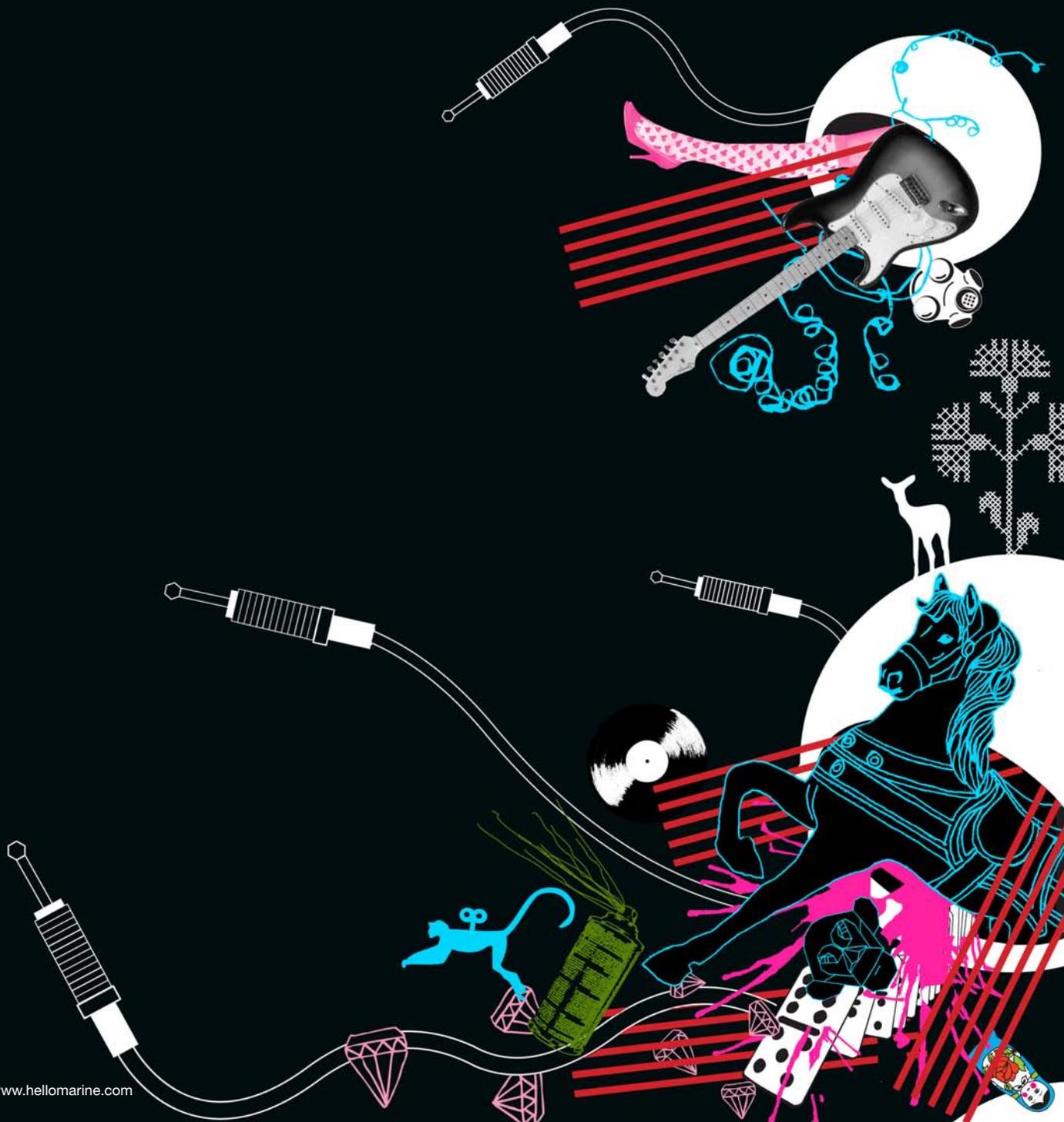
Marine is a freelance designer and illustrator based in Brighton UK. You can check out her work at www.hellomarine.com including the sleeve for the recent Alice Russell album on Tru Thoughts Recordings.

A freelance writer and journalist, Jack Roberts is the founding editor of Bad Idea magazine. He currently writes for The Daily Telegraph and The Sunday Telegraph, and has previously contributed for magazines including The Erotic Review, Marmalade, and Dazed and Confused.

Graham Baird is a freelance a photographer and video editor. He likes to apply his interest in a variety of mediums, especially screen, print, and typography.

Film Maker and Los Angelean native Davon Ramos has completed projects as Sloth Angeles for various clients such as Stones Throw Records. Check issue 3 for an indepth interview.

Hailing from Swindon in the UK, Mike Hirst's time is divided between his day job, skateboarding with the Rolling Like Kingz crew and unleashing his unique observations .





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Welcome to issue #4 which marks the completion of our first volume. It was a little more than a year ago now that we started sending out emails asking heads if they'd like to appear in the first issue. Our original idea of providing people with some space for a bit of exposure has taken on a real life of it's own since then and I want to thank everyone who's been involved so far (both the contributors and our readers) for jumping in with us. This wouldn't still be happening without you.

As usual, the issue is an amalgamation of things that have grabbed our attention at some point. It's yours now, do what you like with it.

There's a load of fresh looking stuff lined up for issue #1 of volume 2 which should find it's way out Jan/Feb 06. By then we hope to have given the website a facelift, adding some more interactive elements to soften the blow each time you check back and find we haven't managed to deliver the new issue yet. There's also talk of radio shows and an online shop to help you get your hands on stuff relating to features but i'm not too sure what's going to surface when. If you're yet to do so, please sign up to the mailing list to stay informed of new developments. We promise not to share your details with anyone else.

Remember, we're constantly on the lookout for new people to contribute to each issue. If you are a writer, illustrator, photographer or if you have a project or some work you'd like to have featured, drop us a line and we can look at hooking something up. If you're none of the above but have an idea you'd like to discuss or just want to say hi, don't hesitate to get in touch.

Enjoy.

R



DIRTY DIGGERS

Photography: Graham Baird



The setting: A “special back stage area” suggested by Diggers, which turns out to be a toilet. Event is a gig at the Jazz Café.

The principles:
Interviewer - Jack Roberts
Dirty Diggers - Pat Stash & Young Max

JR: Can you tell me a little bit about yourselves. Where are you from and how did you meet up?

PS: I'm from East London, Forest Gate, went to a school in Leytonstone, to college in Walthamstow...A lot of people went to my school, DJ Excalibah and a few of the people coming up in the grime scene. Jamma, there's that other little brer...What's his name? Fumin' that's it...

JR: Someone told me you knew Plan B from way back...

PS: Yeah. I don't want to talk about Plan B (starts cracking up).

JR: You knew him?

PS: Not really. He's from Forest Gate, but yeah...Let's not talk about Plan B.

JR: So you went to Sussex University, which is how you met Max. What was the meeting like?

YM: The meeting? Ah (looks to PS), this is the old school legend isn't it? I was in my first week party phase. I had about 10 people in my room and “B-Boy Document” was playing mega loud on my stereo. It was so loud it went all the way down to Pat's room. He heard it and was like, “Who's playing B-Boy Document?” so he came upstairs...

PS: It was the freshers ball. I was mad naked in my bed, drunk, and I kind of put some clothes on and came upstairs...You know when you're really drunk and you think that sleeping naked will be the most comfortable shit but actually it's not?

JR: Nah.

PS: (looking sheepish & cracking up) Well really it ain't the most comfortable shit, it's mad uncomfortable...

YM: This is deep. I don't think anyone here expected to find out this kind of shit. This ain't “OK Playa”...

PS: Yeah, you wouldn't get this in an e-mail interview...

JR: Okay, so this naked reverie led to...
PS: Us? Well we just started hanging out basically and...

YM: Just to recap my brief life story is; originally from Halifax, moved to Hebden Bridge, went to school all over West Yorkshire, went to Sussex uni as well – basically because I got to go to America for a year. I know you know about that...

JR: Certainly know about that.

YM: Met Pat in Sussex, and the rest is legend...

JR: What's the story with Dirty Diggers? I know you guys kicked around together before, but what made you start the group?

YM: We discovered pretty early on that we were locked into a competition to the death to see who could find the best drums...

PS: I made proper hip hop beats, whereas Max made weird shit beats...And that kind of continues to this day, but he's beginning to mitigate them with some semi-good beats.

JR: So you guys started off playing at parties?

PS: Nah, just making tunes in Max's room...

YM: It really started off when we got signed off our first tune – “500 Whiskeys” at an open mic...

(Goes on for a bit about how Zebra Traffic heard them, the people who scouted them, the tune itself etc.)

YM: ...Basically we were both shit in Brighton for ages, then I went away to America and I came back and we decided to be less shit. Then we made some new tunes...

PS: ...And they were better. Then we did 4 tunes with Tommy C, who knows all about production and Zebra put it out. That's it really. Now we've done a small album and two videos.

YM: Our mate Harry does our videos.

PS: Yeah, we've been getting a lot of people coming up to us saying they like the way we did the “That's Why” video.

JR: Your debut EP is called “Diggers Don't Get Days Off.” Why don't Diggers get days off?

YM: This is a little told story. I was originally in a tiny Yorkshire town called Keighley and I was supposed to be on some day out and my mum was expecting me to do something – to go look at some cultural type shit – and I was like, “Nah. Diggers don't get days off. I need to go to this record shop...”

PS (angry): No it weren't from that!

YM: Yes it was. I thought of it in Keighley...

PS: Nah it wasn't. Did you actually say it?

YM: Yeah I did.

PS: That's bollocks. Bollocks.

YM: Yeah I did.

PS: Bollocks. You've never told that story before!

YM: Why would I make that up? It was when I bought that weird Dutch jazz record with a white horse on the cover. It weren't any good, but I did buy it. Then, we met P Brothers a few days later, and we were relating about how “Diggers don't get days off,” and they were like, “Yeah.”

JR (to PS): What's your side of the story then?

PS: I've never heard that story ever before. He's trying to bring Yorkshire and digging into it, yeah, because that fit his agenda.

YM: My agenda!?!

PS: The way I know it, we were talking to P Brothers about how we dig all the time and Max said, “Diggers don't get days off,” and so I said, “That would be a good name for a tune.” We made a tune about it, the tune was shit, but then we thought “Yeah, it's still a good title, let's use it for the EP.” But I've never heard this Keighley business, that's a load of shit...(cracks up)

YM: You can choose to hate, but that's your choice.

JR: Moving swiftly on. How would you describe your sound?

YM: It's just crate digging...

PS: I don't really know what to say about “our sound”...

YM: We sample records and...

PS: It's just “soft hip hop,” not trying to be hard...

YM: I'm trying to be a West Yorkshire Heiroglyphics...

PS: “Poof hip hop.”

YM doubles up.

PS: Don't put that in. We don't want no heat now. “Not that there's anything wrong with it...”

PS puts his head in his hands.

PS: Aghhh...This is why we only do e-mail interviews...I don't know, it's just hip hop that's not based around trying to be “the hardest spitter” or “the hardest gangsta” it's just trying to be honest... (We start talking about UK grime & UK hip hop's similarities, even though a lot of people in each scene are purist about the other. We also talk about artists in each scene who try to fake American accents and emulate the subjects of American hip hop, posing as a hard man etc...)

YM: I think, to be honest, we're trying to get away from the “I'm the ruggedest gangsta and I'll stab your face off if you even look at me” kind of hip hop, but also trying not to do the “Oh, I've got 10 pence and I'm on the dole and life's miserable because it's raining and The Man sold my stuff for crack” kind of hip hop.

JR: Do you think British hip hop can be a bit earnest?

PS: Yeah.

YM: Not even earnest, but people need to realise that life's not that bad but it's not that good. It's about being honest about good shit and bad shit, and not romanticising your own state of affairs.

JR: So you reckon there's not enough fun being had in UK hip hop?

PS: People don't have fun at hip hop jams in London.

YM: If they do they feel guilty about it...

PS: No-one is having fun.

YM: People have fun in Leeds.

PS: People have fun up North on drugs.

Northerners are druggies and

Southerners are sour faced scumbags...

JR: That much is true...

YM: Please put that out.

JR: So with your own music, what kind of direction are you trying to take UK hip hop in?

YM: More pornographic. We're trying to get more of that explicit hardcore sexual imagery in there with a kind of "wet thong competition" vibe...

JR: You're kind of failing.

YM: Well, we haven't done very well so far...

PS: We're too ugly for sex rap.

JR: Your tunes are full of rhymes about debt, drinking, and cratedigging. It seems to be a vicious cycle. How accurately does that reflect your lives right now?

YM: Drinking is a problem, an actual problem. Cratedigging is a good problem...

JR: But you can see how they're all related...

PS: They are related...

YM: You sound like my fucking Mum.

PS: Max just today spent £60 on records for one break really...

YM: But I got a banging break...

PS: It's just being shit with money and being a shit, irresponsible idiot.

YM: Nah, you've got to speculate to accumulate.

PS: That's bollocks.

JR: So how much does that reflect your lives? I take it you're not making stackloads of money right now...

PS: It is quite an accurate reflection.

YM: I actually wish we could write tunes about something else, I wish I had something better to write about.

PS: For most people in this country, drinking is a big part of their lives. It's a big part of our culture and a big aspect of most ordinary working peoples' lives.

JR: But you're not full time recording artists, so what's your day to day?

PS: Yeah I work. I skip in between working shit temp jobs, working at a hospital in Newham, being on the dole, and doing any kind of work shit. We don't make a living off music.

YM: I did try to live off music for a couple of months, but then I was really fucked. It was a fun couple of months though...

PS: Everyone has to work.

JR: Taking on board the whole "tales of debt/drinking/cratedigging" angle, what separates the two of you from your average rum-fuelled, down and out wax fiend?

PS: Nothing. *(Cracks up.)* Except I don't drink rum.

YM: I like rum...But you're forgetting the gimmick thing. I'm from up North, he's from down South. It's our gimmick...

PS: Nothing separates us. We are just your average rum-fuelled down and out wax fiends. But we don't drink that much...

YM: What the fuck are you on about "we don't drink that much."

PS: We don't.

YM: What the fuck are you on about? Twice this week you rang me up and said to me "I puked my guts out."

PS: We don't drink that much, we just like a drink like most people do.

YM: No, we drink more than that.

PS: No we don't.

YM: Yeah we do.

PS: No we don't.

YM: Yeah we do.

PS: No, people in this country are drunks. It's true...

JR: Are you looking forward to being pigeonholed when your album comes out?

PS: Yeah!

JR: How do you think you'll be pigeonholed?

YM: "Boho skint vibe."

PS: That was our favourite one out of the clippings from the first EP. That we're, like, "trying to reinvent the hip hop genre in the boho skint model."

YM: That fucked us off.

PS: Nah, I just don't care, it's just funny. It doesn't matter. Any success is good.

YM: The one thing I hope is that if people describe us, they say that what we're doing is a bit like party music or whatever. Every time we do a gig, we come on and say, "I hope you're here to have an actual good time, because fuck standing around and being screwface."



JR: So you want people out on the dancefloor?

YM: Well we do have a couple of headphone tunes that don't really work in a club, but as a general rule we only do a tune if it makes us want to dance around the bedroom and rap to it.

JR: You've called your upcoming debut album "Freakishly Strong." What's with the title?

PS: It's a secret.

YM: It's a reference to a hero of ours who, although strikingly ugly, was freakishly strong and surprisingly popular with the ladies.

JR: What can we expect from the album?

YM: We're better at rapping now because we've done more shows.

PS: Lots of different styles of beats.

YM: We've tried to make every beat sound different. The new stuff is a bit more conceptual as well.

JR: In what way?

PS: The tunes are more about things now, rather than just about rapping.

YM: Rather than just being about how ace we are and how we love to have a party...

PS: There are some more tunes like that...

YM: Yeah, there's a few more like that, but there's others about deep shit (laughs)

PS: Drinking.

YM: And there's one about sorting your life.

JR: Are there any tunes like, say, LL Cool J's "I Need a Girl"?

PS: Yeah. It's called "Will You." But it's not about girls, it's about mates...

YM: It's about how, even though you don't see them for years, they're still your bredrins.

Interview is temporarily disrupted by a girl who needs to use the toilet.

New setting: Backstage common room w/food, drink for bands. Musicians from Tru Thoughts group Nostalgia 77 are milling around.

JR: Picking up where we left off... Considering it's limited vinyl release, your last EP did pretty well. It quickly sold out and the songs got support from Steve Lamacq amongst other DJ's...

YM: We were mega surprised by it. We thought that we liked it, I mean, we kind of made what we wanted to hear. But I wasn't really expecting to do so well.

JR: Have you changed much between the EP and the new album material?

YM: I think we liked what we were doing before, so we've kept looking for weird records, kept making beats that we like, and kept writing rhymes about stuff that's going on in our lives. People seemed to like the old stuff so hopefully they'll like the new stuff as well.

PS: If we get as good a reception from the new songs that we got for the old songs then that's all good, and we'd really appreciate that.

YM: We did a jam the other day in Leeds and the mics cut out halfway through the tune. The crowd just kept going though – they knew all the words – and when the mics came back on we just came back in again. If we can get that kind of reception from the new tunes I'll be happy.

JR: Is it only hip hop kids who like your stuff?

YM: We get some people who come up to us who say "I don't like hip hop, but I like your shit" and that's cool by me.

JR: I know you both make a lot of beats. Do you have any side projects lined up?

YM: Yeah, kind of. I've got a little thing up North called "Northern Property" with some mates from Leeds, and Pat's been doing a lot of beats with other people as well.

PS: Yeah, I've got a beat on the new Shameless EP – I'm not sure what it's called, I think it's called "Addicted."

YM: We've got a tune with Simpson as well, not sure what's happening with that but it should come out sometime.

JR: I heard that you were doing some stuff with Khingz (a West Coast rapper) in LA. Are you going to get any chance to release that stuff?

YM: He's coming over in November, so we'll get him down the studio. We're supposed to be producing his EP and we may get him to guest on some Diggers stuff. He's a difficult guy to get hold of though – he lives in Oakland and he doesn't have a phone that works...

JR: Is there anyone doing their thing on the UK hip hop scene who you either admire or would recommend to newcomers to UK hip hop?

PS: Yeah. Cappo, Jehst...

YM: I like Ty...

PS: Definitely Ty, Super T, Lewis Parker...

YM: I like Klashnekoff and Skinnyman. There's a lot of good stuff out there. Brok'n English are heavy. Also Brimham Rocks – Brimham are heavy.

JR: In terms of American hip hop?

YM: It's all about Common at the moment.

PS: I like all kinds of stuff from the US. I'm kind of into that trendy Sa Ra, Jay Dee scene. It's musically interesting.

JR: Outside of hip hop what music are you feeling right now?

YM: Prog rock, innit.

PS: Nostalgia 77 (looks around at members from the band and starts to laugh). No, actually I am really feeling their album...

YM: I've been listening to Weather Report – there's a prog band right there...

JR: Is there anything you've heard recently that surprised you?

PS: Yeah, I like The Coral.

YM: I really like a lot of the stuff that my mates give me.

PS: I like Wiley. I just think he's an endearing guy.

JR: One last question; if I could link you guys up with anyone in the world of music right now, who would you like to collaborate with?

PS: Jay Dee. Wiley.

YM: I'd like to do a tune with Heiroglyphics.

PS: The Pharcyde. And also 88 Keys, who's a producer in America.

JR: Cool. That's it.

YM: Peace.

END

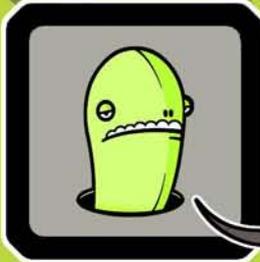
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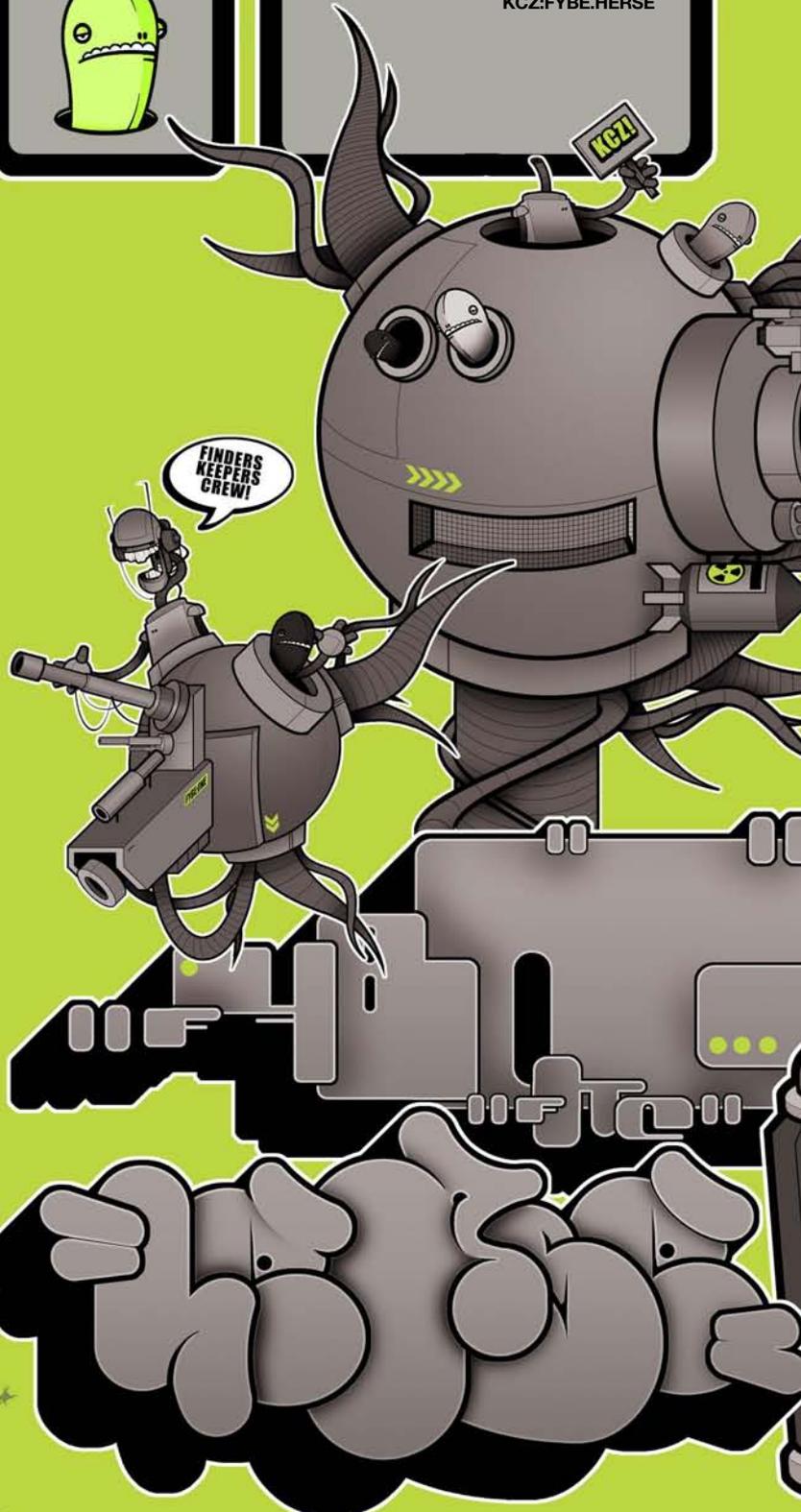
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Shafei & Levitz

When Dave Shafei arrives at 9:15 for the 9:00 interview he explains how he had arrived earlier, around 8:30, but that nobody was how home. His pension for being early and the bottle of Sauvignon Blanc in his hand are perhaps the only indication that he is a trained but non-practicing attorney. Saul Levitz, longtime video/film maestro and friend, is another story completely.

"Where's Levitz?"

Dave shrugs.

"Oh shit, is this *Mission to Mars*?" he asks.

"Nah, the other one."

"Oh, *Red Planet*."

"Yup."

"This movie sucks," he says, laughing.

"I know." Laughing.

Just then Levitz strolls in.

"What's up dude?" I ask.

Saul smiles the smile he usually reserves for his lawyer and his girlfriend. "Sorry bro, got caught up with my Moms having dinner." He focuses on the TV screen. "Oh shit, is this *Red Planet*?"

And for a second I think that even though I have Shafei & Levitz in the same room, it is quite possible that this interview might not happen.

But that's how it is with this directing duo out of Los Angeles: Family first, Directing second and Pop Culture Trivia a very close third. It's only been two years since Saul and Dave met at Los Angeles production house HKM and began working together as a directing team but their resume belies their relatively recent foray into the world of music videos.

"400 blows was the first one (video)," Saul says as he pulls out a small bag and begins rolling a joint.

"We kind of worked on a bunch of stuff before hand though," Shafei says. "But a lot of stuff fell through. The first video was *Pigeon Jon*..."

The Sauvignon is cracked and poured.

Saul: "That was actually the first song we talked about, Pigeon Jon...(he starts singing [sort of]) *My Name is Pigeon Jon, My name is Pigeon Jon.*"

Shafei joins in. "*My Name is Pigeon Jon, MEEEEEEEE.*"

Saul looks up and laughs. "We wanted to do a video for that fool and he blew us off in an email." He pauses to light the spliff. "Then we got blown off by all these other people in emails," shaking his head.

"We did it for a long time, just trying to make things happen. And probably the thing I'm most proud of," Dave says "is that we kept on. Things would blow up and collapse and we would just be like, "OK, next."

And that's how Levitz & Shafei roll. Will. Determination. Familia.



Dave: "Yeah, a couple of days before one of our first shoots - this is when I'm going to law school and I'm getting out of my car for a night class - I get this call from a manager saying that (the bassist) wasn't going to be available for the shoot. That he had to work. And I was like 'What's his phone number, we need to talk to him.' Then I called up Saul...and I think we decided to offer the guy coke."

Saul: "And he went for it!"

Dave: "But man, they came onto set and killed it... they never missed a beat and by the end of the day, after a 14 hour shoot, we all went out drinking."

In between the mayhem substantial work is being made and the cohesiveness of their videos is mutually attributed to the intensely collaborative nature of their partnership. Every decision is worked on collectively and from the seeding of the writing process, to direction on set and sitting in on the post-production.

Dave: "Like today we wrote our treatment..."

Saul: "While I was on the phone building a fucking cabinet I got from *IKEA*...And you were probably on the shitter, right."

Laughing.

Dave: "Yeah, exactly. I think we are both procrastinators in the exact same way. Whenever I'm trippin, like 'I can't fucking write this, oh shit. Fuckin Saul's over there, he's fuckin writin.' And then I know Saul's like, 'FUCCCCKKKK' fucking building a cabinet."

"Yeah, it's always in sync like that," Saul says.

The method remains to be seen but the result is undeniable. With a list of work that includes artists such as *The Helio Sequence*, *Gift of Gab*, *Adventure Time*, *Idiot Pilot*, and *Mia Doi Todd*. Shafei and Levitz have been putting in work and making beautiful, unexpected pieces in the process.

Saul: "That's really what the job is, trying to understand music. Like, being understanding of where an artist is coming from and what they're trying to do beyond your own tastes. At least that's what we try to do...make stuff close to the artist."

Dave: "It's about the music and how do we show the artist in the best light and show them how they are. In the end you can't fake it. It's gotta be sincere on some level or else what's the fucking point of doing...anything."

The bottle of Sauvignon Blanc almost gone and a trip to the local bar inevitable, I decide to drop the conversation into the lighting round.

Sloth: So...*Back to the Future* 1,2 or 3?

Saul: Uhhhh, I'd have to say 2. But 3 is pretty kick ass.

Sloth: Alba or Lohan?

Dave: You know what? I'm gonna have to go out on a limb and go with Lohan...just because she's young and-

Sloth: Whewww. Controversial...

Saul: *I like it!*

Dave: Lohan would earn it. Jessica Alba knows she's Jessica Alba.

Saul: I saw her episode on *Entourage*. Another good show.

Sloth: I just watched the marathon.

Dave: Oh, yeah, I was here.

Sloth: I watched 'til like two in the morning. I was like, "Fuck it, I'm committed."

Dave: That's a good show.

Sloth: *Into the Blue* (Alba's new movie)...are we gonna do that?

Saul: Ooohh

Dave: Bad Movie Club? I'm there.

To see the videos go to: www.shafeilevitz.com

Videography

Idiot Pilot "A Day In The Life of A Poolshark"

Gift of Gab "Rat Race"

Mia Doi Todd "Deep At Sea"(DNTEL Remix)

Mia Doi Todd "My Room is White"

Helio Sequence "Everyone Knows Everyone"

Adventure Time "Sent From Sandy Shores"

400 Blows "Mortar & Pestle"

DNTEL "Last Songs"

Broken Social Scene "Pitter Patter Goes My Heart"





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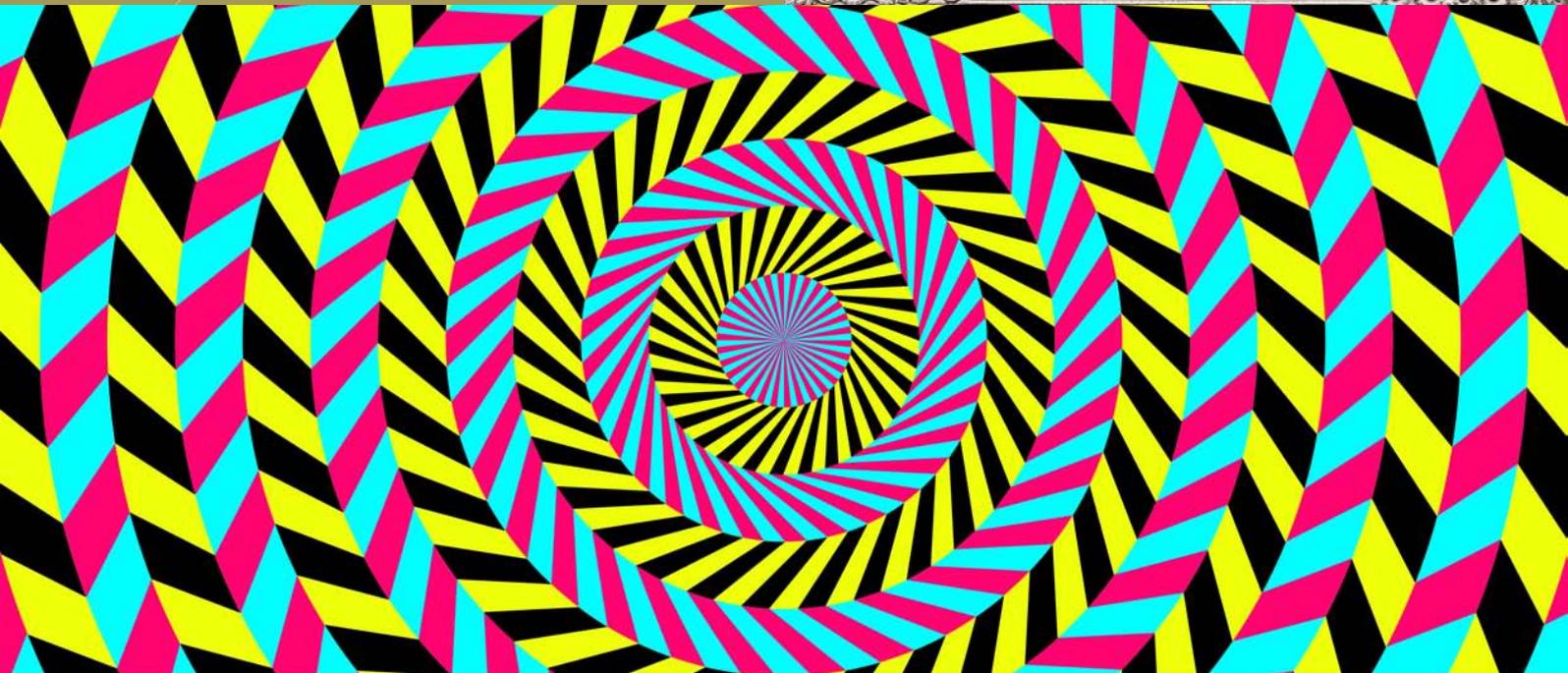
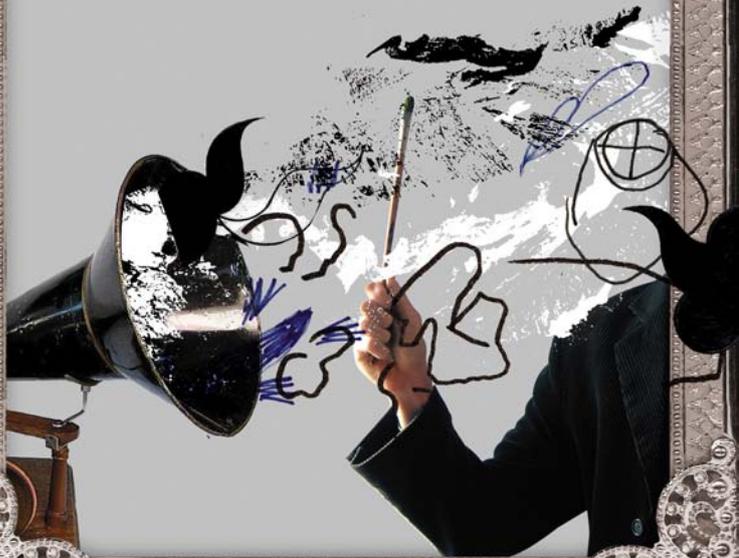
NEWS

Mia060 - Lomov / Vorstadt LP (free mp3)

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Erik @ Miasmab Design is looking for freelance work



AUDION SUCKFISH

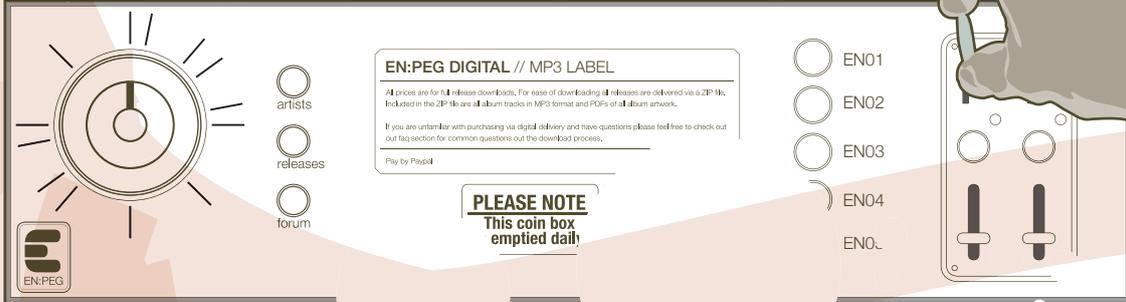
"Unapologetically cold and hard, Audion is Matthew Dear's calculated excuse for some sinister body jackin' hedonism."
- Tokion

"Acid lashings, stilleto stabs, and knotty sub-bass -- this is the sound of giving in and letting go."
- Philip Sherburne (Pitchforkmedia, The Wire)



EN:PEG

DIGITAL



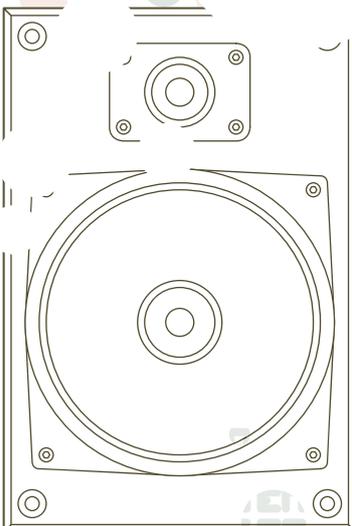
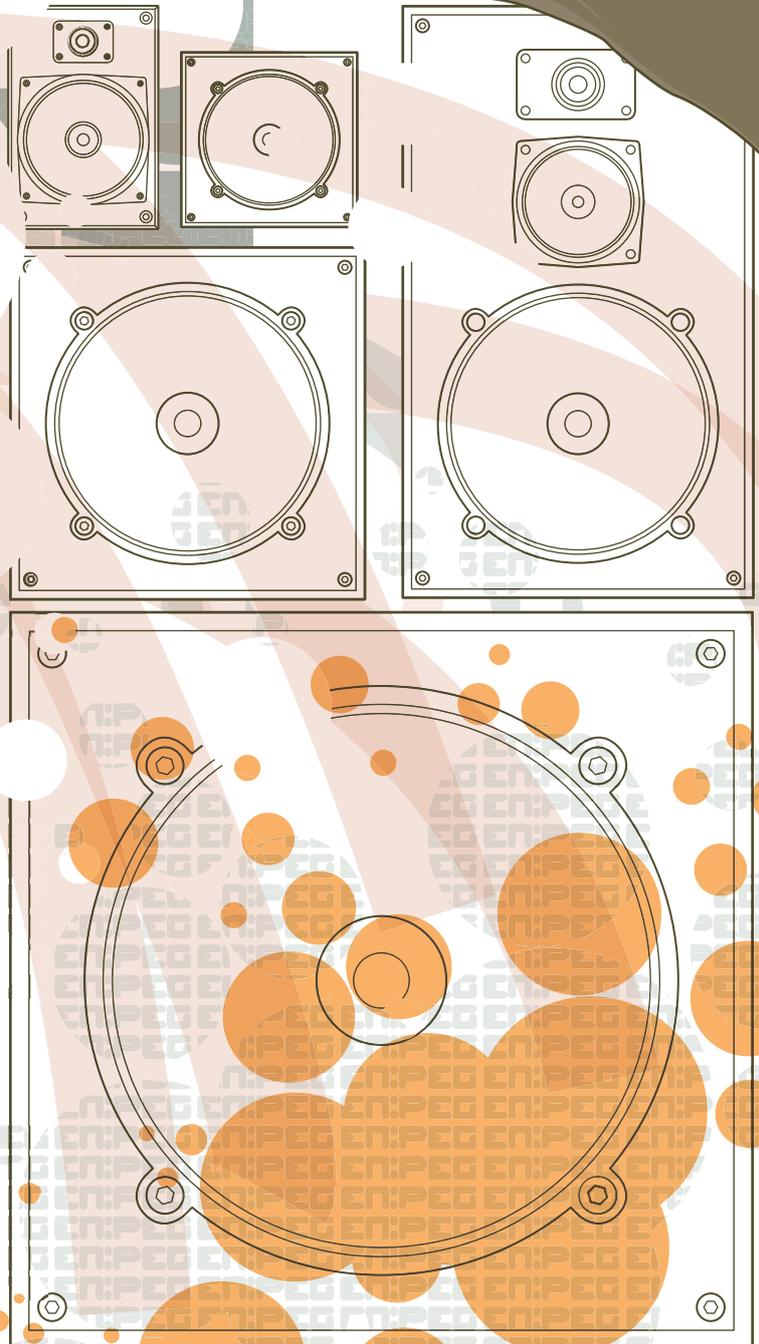
"Started by a splinter cell of the self proclaimed n5MD mafia, friends and informants, en:peg digital is a way for artists to release music, without the monetary limitations of pressing, distribution, and shipping."

With 25 releases to date and more planned before the year is up, en:peg has grown fast without any sign of compromise in their material. Each high quality VBR encoded releases comes complete with artwork for an amazing \$2.00. Both tray and cover artwork are in pdf format ready to import into your favorite CD labeling software.

In the words of it's creator...
"En:peg Digital started about one year ago. Several months prior i had been receiving a good number of quality demos but really didn't have the resources to release them all via n5MD. I had already developed the Pay-Per-

Download system for n5MD and had the idea to start a net label that utilized the same system. So i sent out a few emails and came up with the \$2.00 per album price based on some artist feedback and overhead calculations. In Nov 2004 we released our first batch of releases, which was 6 altogether. Those 6 (by aem, headphone science, polar, phaeon and pomme de terre) set the tone of the label "High Quality releases for very little money"."

visit: www.enpeg.com



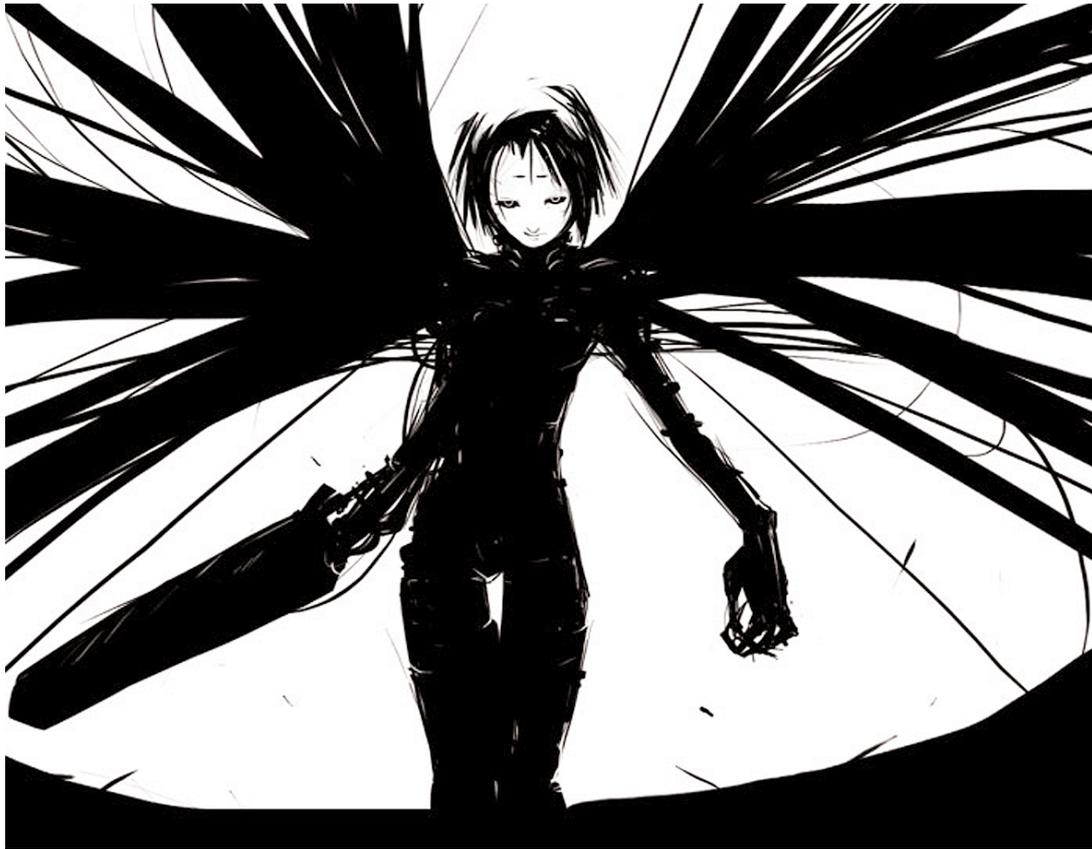


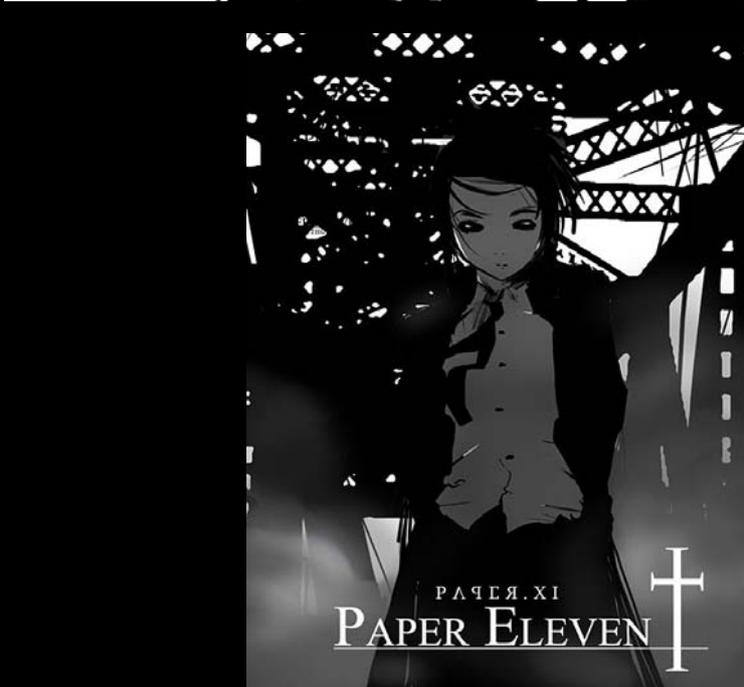
CLONE MANGA

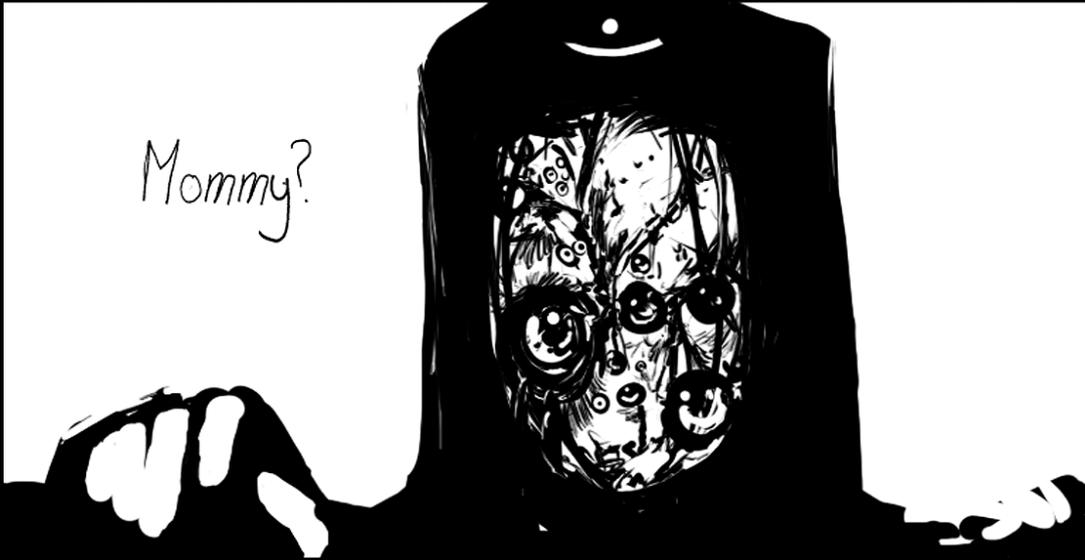
clone.manga is home to the collected works of Dan Kim, the artist behind the images inhabiting these next few pages. The site has grown steadily in terms of content and now presents quite a resource for anyone wanting to escape their world for a while in favour of his path of dark distraction. There's a number of visual stories on offer, each of which are regularly updated with new installments. The simpler drawn serial strips like 'Nana' provide a daily smerck for those of us with somewhat more ambiquous ethics but it is the more labour intensive graphic novels like the completed 'Paper XI' and current 'Kanami' that offer a real glimpse of the imagination unleashed here. Dark tales, told in an almost awquardly abstract manner, offering the reader enough freedom to interpret the subject matter as they wish. This is very much my perception of 'Paper XI' and as 'Kanami' unfolds I'm expect nothing less creatively orchestrated. The former of these two titles is now available in print as are a number of Dans illustrations.

Check www.manga.clone-army.org and drop yourself a bookmark.

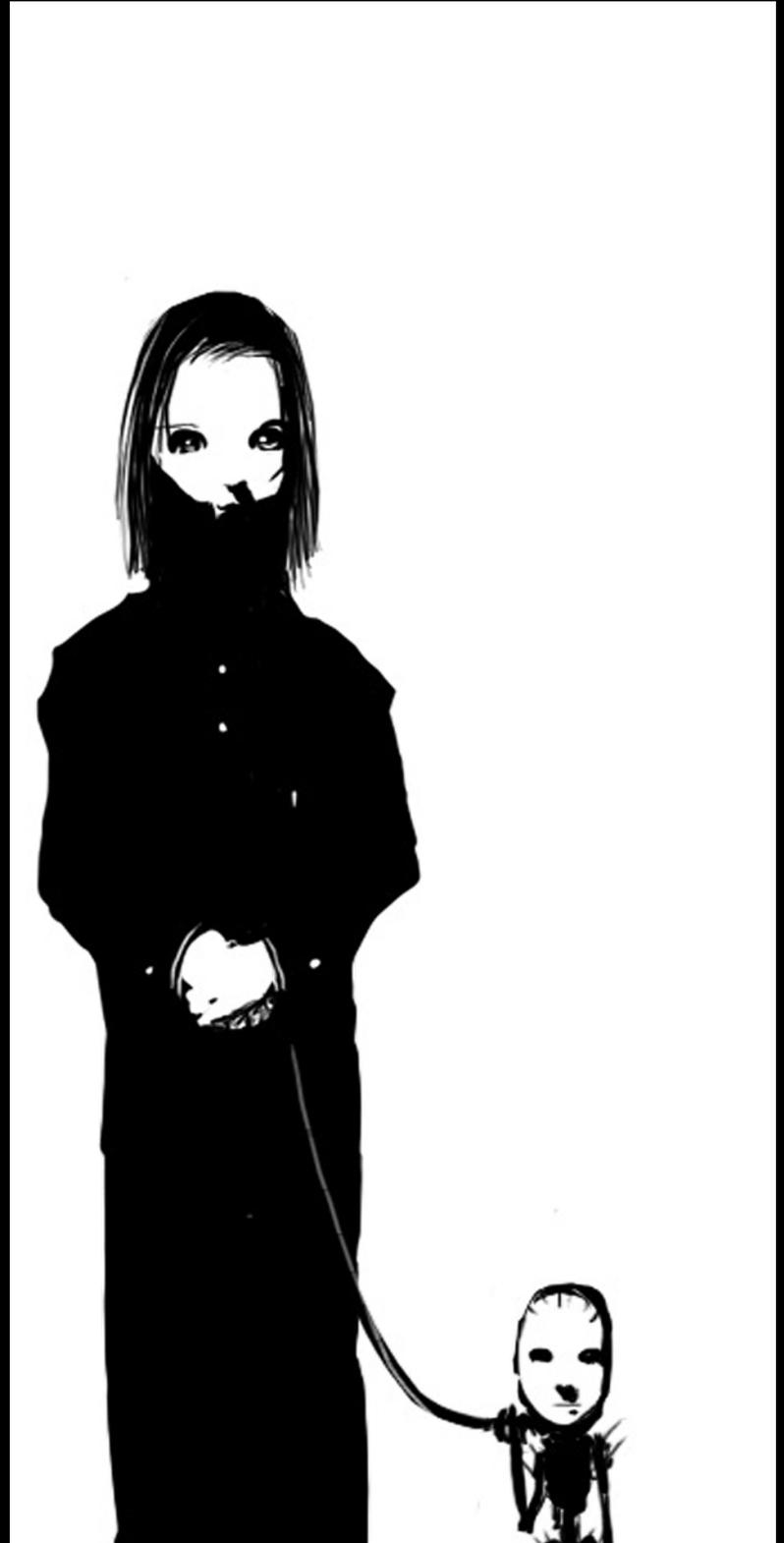












LUSINE

Words: James Wyatt

Lusine's music possesses a compelling and often highly distinctive sound whilst continually maintaining an extensive range stylistically. Over the last 6 years his work has graced a variety of labels including Delikatessen, Hymen and U-Cover with remix and compilation contributions for numerous other projects. More recently a bulk of Lusine's output has been released through the Michigan based Ghostly International. Jeff McIlwain the man behind Lusine explains a little about himself and his work

Raised in Dallas Texas, educated at LA's Cal Art School and now residing in Seattle, Jeff started making music when he was around 18 years old. "Why? Well, I guess I was into the idea of separating out the elements of music that I liked the most and creating something new. I basically had a drum machine and a keyboard, the whole computer music thing was in its very initial stages, so I couldn't really afford to buy a computer until '95 or so. My music was pretty awful back then and wasn't even listenable until around '97 when I first started playing live gigs."

Artists that inspired him initially include "Nine Inch Nails, New Order, Aphex Twin, Speedy J, Atom Heart, etc". However "They are a very small part of what goes into my music today. Which is only to say that I am inspired by new artists all the time, people like Apparat, Wighnomy Bros., Efterklang, Adam Johnson, Blonde Redhead, Fennesz, Loscil, Susumu Yokota, Mit Gang Audio, etc... So, I think that for me to continue being inspired, I have to keep moving on, take in new music, and let my own music evolve". Roughly defining his work as "experimental electronic music" he goes onto say "I don't think it's all minimal, but I think that's where my taste lies. I spend more time stripping down than building up, so I don't mind adding that "minimal" tag". The Lusine sound, although often immediately identifiable, seems to constantly develop and evolve. "I think keeping up with all of the music and art being created out there keeps you thinking. Anyone that holes themselves up or claims to not have any influences probably makes pretty consistent, or, consistently boring music. Aside from that, I think it's fun to try to pick up new instruments, and figure out different ways of creating sounds and musical structures. It gets a lot more difficult to try not repeating yourself when you've made so much music before. It's also hard to gain a fresh perspective when you're used to doing things a certain way. So, I guess, if it gets to be easy, you're probably not trying hard enough."

Composition is not always an intuitive process "There's definitely a period before I start making a track where I get really frustrated because I don't know where I'm going. Then there comes a point about a quarter of the way through where I know what I'm doing and that's where the process starts to come together". There is a desire to get more into pre-composition, he believes there is a tendency to rely on certain structures, which become apparent during the writing process "If I force myself to not do that by laying out the structure beforehand, I might come up with some interesting results".

The journey toward creating music as a full time occupation has been more of an evolution than a predetermined objective. "The good thing about the music industry is that regardless of how many records you sell, you will find a way to carve out a living from it. It's just not the most traditional lifestyle. I started out thinking I was going to do this whole post production audio thing. If I wasn't releasing records at the time, I probably would have just continued to do that, but things just sort of worked out differently for me and I realized I couldn't make time for both".

Releasing work through a variety of labels has primarily been an attempt to reach different audiences, but also as a result of meeting some like minded people who were willing to put out his material. There's not really been any focus on tailor making tracks for specific labels, but "I started to think that my domestic releases could be an outlet for the more dance floor oriented, or at least more straightforward material. Shad at Isophlux started becoming more interested in releasing music that wasn't so focused on technical wizardry, which was good for me". So, like the Surface EP, Push was originally scheduled to be released through Isophlux. After their untimely demise he was approached by Ghostly International, who'd previously shown an interest in his work. The timing turned out to be pretty good. The Push tracks needed a home and Ghostly seemed like the logical choice for that particular record. "I Like Ghostly for the fact that he's not so focused on one style of music, and that he still cares about releasing quality stuff over the latest trend. I guess it's not always the best short term solution in terms of profits, but it raises your profile as a label in the long run. I hope it stays that way" Jeff agrees that some of his recent success can be attributed to working with an internationally renowned label like Ghostly. "I'm not sure how great I feel about that aspect of it, just because I was happy with my other releases on Hymen and Delikatessen, but I understand that's how it is, and in the end I would like for my stuff to be heard. Maybe people will be interested in going back to hear some of my older stuff after hearing the Ghostly stuff" With regards to future releases on other labels, "I'm starting to think about making a record for Hymen that's going to be way more "out there" or at least ambient as opposed to the more up front Ghostly stuff".

Music has enabled him to travel around the globe, playing live gigs in a variety of countries. He's been fortunate enough to visit some amazing places and get to know some really great people. Impressed by organizer's commitment "I'm not sure how these promoters do it, but I really think for the majority of them, they care mostly about the music, it definitely seems like hard work organizing events and flying artists halfway around the world. I think it's pretty inspiring to see that your music can motivate people to do things like that". Although he admits that as much as it can be great fun there are times when playing live can be pretty depressing, depending on how your shows are received. On the bright side "after you play a lot of shows, you realize that the bad shows are just as important as the good ones because they get you to turn inwards rather than care about what other people think".

When performing live, the use of a laptop running Ableton in conjunction with an external Midi controller is regularly the setup. This has changed drastically since the early outings in '97 when he would pretty much take the whole studio out. A few lessons were learned the hard way, with pieces of equipment regularly going out on him. He feels the very compact laptop setup is not only far more reliable, but actually creates a situation that enables him to interact in a way that is more "live" than it ever was before. Often reworking previously recorded material to create "interesting and segueing music". Carrying way more material than he will ever need in one set, allowing the flexibility to choose which tracks to go with from show to show. "It unquestionably depends on the venue. A lot of places in Germany pretty much require 4 floor sets, especially if I'm touring with Matthew Dear...! But, that's fine, because I like techno, and I still don't think it's too much of a departure from what I normally do"

Musical contributions have recently been made to the Reline DVD project in the form of a collaboration with the UK's D-fuse (famed for their work in creating the Onedotzero series) The resulting audio/visual track titled "data_flow" was included on the Reline 2 release, and also licensed to Ruga magazine. While there are no immediate plans for further visual projects, two videos, accompanying tracks "Numbers" and "Auto Pilot" are available for download at the Lusine web site. These same artists have created two additional pieces which will feature on the forthcoming Podgelism CD.

Although Jeff doesn't personally involve himself in visual creativity very often, he is a big fan of motion pictures and would relish the opportunity to score a film. "I've worked on a few film scores in the past. In a programmer capacity. But, that was in LA, and you lose a lot of those opportunities when you're not living there. I would love to truly score a film, it's just a hard circle to get into".

"I love contemplative, somewhat static films that still have strong screenplays. But, I think I can still appreciate different styles".

"I'm a huge fan of Robert Altman. Also Hirokazu Koreeda, Wong Kar Wai, Alexander Payne, PT Anderson...and Michel Gondry/Kaufman are some of my favorite new ones, Shane Carruth is also a pretty promising new director I think".

There's plenty in the pipeline for Lusine. As well as further releases for Ghostly in the shape of the Emerald 12" EP and the "Podgelism" CD. Which is a combination of all the Ghostly EP releases (including Emerald). Remixes from Apparat, Cepia, Matthew Dear, Deru, Dimbiman, Lawrence, John Tejada, and the earlier mentioned videos. There will also be track contributions for a Hymen ambient series CD plus a remix of Lawrence "The Night Will Last Forever" 12" on Mute.

Jeff is also interested in the idea of producing other people's music. "Working with bands, singers, etc... I think it would be a good way to learn about other styles and add my mark". He also hopes that there may be some sound design opportunities in the future.

Details of future releases and live performances can be found at:
www.Lusineweb.com

Discography

Lusine - Inside/Out 12"
Ghostly International :: GI-47
2005 // www.ghostly.com

Lusine - Serial Hodgepodge CD/2XLP
Ghostly International :: GI-37
2004 // www.ghostly.com

Lusine - Flat Remixes (12")
Ghostly International :: GI-27
2004 // www.ghostly.com

Lusine ICL - Condensed (CD)
Hymen :: ¥734
2003 // www.klangstabil.com/hymen/

Lusine ICL - Chao EP (12")
Mental Industries Records :: MIR 001.4
2003 // www.mental-ind.de

Lusine - Push (12")
Ghostly International :: GI-17
2003 // www.ghostly.com

Lusine ICL / The Buddy System - Split (7")
Awkward Silence Recordings :: AWKWARD 11
2002 // www.btinternet.com/~awkwardsilence/

Lusine ICL - Iron City (2xLP, CD)
Hymen :: ¥037 / ¥721
Mad Monkey Records :: MMR1203 / MMR08
may 2002 // www.klangstabil.com/hymen/

Lusine ICL - Sustain (10")
Delikatessen Records :: PLATE 1
2002 // www.delikatessen-records.com

Lusine ICL - Coalition 2000 (CD)
U-Cover :: u-cover 006
2001 // www.u-cover.com

Lusine ICL - Slipthrough (12")
Hymen :: ¥031
2001 // www.klangstabil.com/hymen/

Lusine - Surface (12")
Isophlux :: ISO 019EP
2001 // www.isophlux.com

Lusine ICL - Zeaelectronic Blue (7")
Zeaelectronic :: Zeaelectronic Blue
2000 // www.zealrecords.com

Lusine ICL - Freak (12")
Hymen :: ¥028
2000 // www.klangstabil.com/hymen/

Lusine ICL - A Pseudo Steady State (CD)
U-Cover :: u-cover 004
2000 // www.u-cover.com

Lusine - Coded (12")
Isophlux :: ISO 014EP
2000 // www.isophlux.com

Lusine - Lusine (CD)
Isophlux :: ISO 011CD
1999 // www.isophlux.com/mixes (12")

TERRATAG

WHEN DID YOU FIRST GET BITTEN BY THE CREATIVE BUG AND WAS IT A CONSCIOUS DECISION TO TREAD DOWN THE GRAPHICS PATH.

Since I was a kid I have always been into doing stuff - drawing, Lego, plastic model kits, etc - so, I guess I have always had the creative bug. There was this time, I'd be about 8, and I customised a Starsky and Hutch car into a Dukes of Hazzard one by painting the Confederate flag on the top and a 01 on the doors. At that time you couldn't get a Dukes Charger so I was able to swap it for loads of stuff with Ian Morris, so even then it paid off to be a bit artistic. The first clothing I customised was probably about 1984 when I was a BMX kid. I cut stencils of the logo of the brand of BMX I had, GT, and spray-painted the logo onto long-sleeved T-shirts. I couldn't afford the official merchandise so had to get creative with a can of car spray.

I UNDERSTAND TERRATAG GREW OUT OF YOUR DESIGN COMPANY PROTOTYPE 21, WAS THIS IN AN EFFORT TO DIVERSIFY YOUR OUTPUT OF WORK UNDER A DIFFERENT BANNER OR JUST TO NOT CONFUSE PEOPLE.

Within a few months of leaving University I started Prototype 21 with a screen-printer called John. Prototype 21 was, and still is, our T-shirt print company. However, Prototype 21 was the brand name of a T-shirt range, the name I used when taking on commission design and illustration work. Most of the contract work was music related and past clients include Andrew Weatherall, Aphex Twin, Global Communication, Orbital, Warp Records and more recently Wagamama, and Production IG animation studios in Japan.

As you can see, over time it got a little confusing with Prototype 21 being a print company, T-shirt brand and design company. In 2002 we broke contract from the company distributing Prototype 21 T-shirts and felt this was a great opportunity to re-focus the brand and, by re-launching as Terratag, clearing up the confusion as to who Prototype 21 was.

YOUR WORK IS AN AMALGAMATION OF MANY STYLES/ELEMENTS, COULD YOU EXPLAIN FOR US HOW OR WHY THE TERRATAG 'STYLE' HAS EVOLVED SINCE ITS INCEPTION.

I am a Japan nut. It started as a kid building Tamiya model kits and associating anything Japanese with cool. But it really kicked off in '86 with the release of Sigue Sigue Sputnik's 'Flaunt it', its sleeve emblazoned with fluorescent pink Japanese text and dominated by a giant robot. I was then hooked... Japanese comics, magazines, films and music... The imagination, the style, the imagery, blowing my mind. The way it works now is that I take Japanese themes, hybridise them and mix them up with European and, in particular, London-based styles. At the moment, it's all about the robots and graffiti.

I do not feel comfortable being seen as belonging to a niche, so I kinda like the idea of taking a little bit of this a little bit of that and coming up with new combinations.

YOU'VE RECENTLY HAD EXHIBITIONS IN SINGAPORE, LONDON AND MELBOURNE, HOW DOES IT FEEL TO HAVE YOUR WORK EXHIBITED WORLDWIDE?

I love it. The way I look at it, whether it is an exhibition, a T-shirt or a posting on fotolog, I love the way you can connect with people. Especially with communication technologies, I really feel that to be a creative now is much freer. Artists, who in the past would have been marginalised, now have a means to communicate with an otherwise marginalised public. The volume and rate of development in the visual arts is phenomenal and I am pleased to be one small part of that.

Nippon 21



Robotto



Welcome to the Future



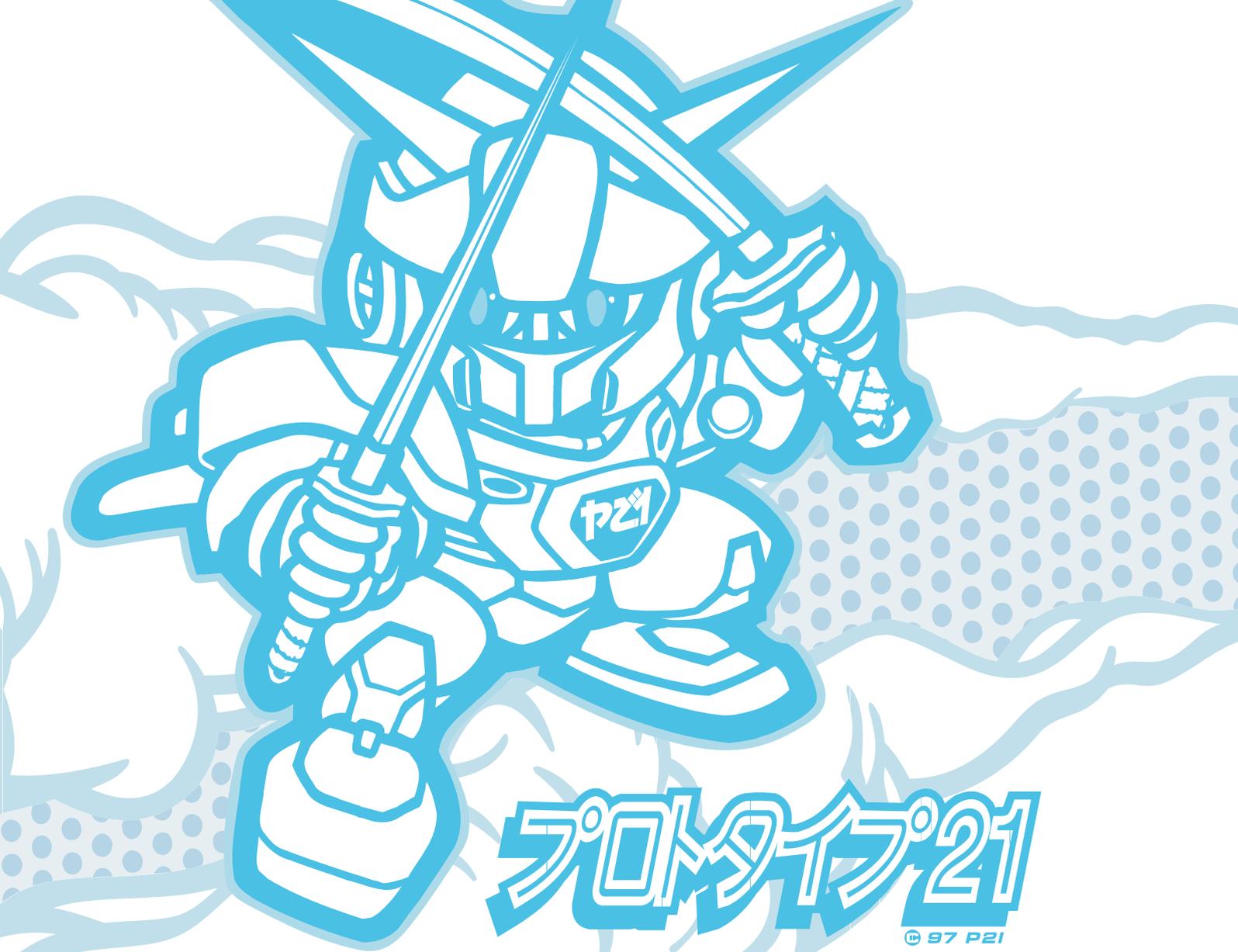
TERRATAGS PERSONAL SELECTION
OF T-SHIRTS FROM 1993 - 2005

1993

1994

1995

DEVELOPMENT FROM PROTOTYPE 21 TO TERRATAG



プロトタイプ21

© 97 P21

P21 V. The World



OK



Genetic



Tokyo Gothic



1996

1997

1998

1999



PROTOTYPE 21: 11:1993 - 02:1998



PROTOTYPE 21: 02:1998 - 02:2000

YOU MENTIONED IN YOUR PREVIOUS ANSWER THAT AS PROTOTYPE 21 YOU PRODUCED DESIGNS FOR THE MUSIC INDUSTRY, FILM PRODUCTION COMPANIES AND EVEN RESTAURANT CHAINS, COULD YOU ENLIGHTEN US AS TO HOW YOU GOT TO WORK ON THOSE PROJECTS AND WHAT THEY INVOLVED?

The music industry work all stemmed from two projects I got whilst still at Uni. The first was a competition to design a logo for a club. The second, another logo, was for Aphex Twin.

The competition was announced on Kiss FM in late '91 to design a logo for a new club called Knowledge. Originally the crew were after just the logo but when I met them I suggested doing a newsletter and helping out at the club. By doing this I met many of the DJ's and producers of the time and was able to introduce myself as a designer. Likewise, with Aphex Twin it was just as an informal approach that got me the work. During the autumn of '91 I was seeing a Cornish girl (the lovely Jenny) who, given my taste for hard electronic music, suggested I hook-up with a guy she knew who made mind-bending tunes at the halls of residence. We got on, he liked my work and I created a logo for him. Within a month he had released Diggerdoo and the logo got used and is still being used my Mr James. After those two logos I got all subsequent work pretty much by word of mouth. I never once pitched for a job or took out a portfolio.

The logo for the Laughing Man, which appeared in Ghost in the Shell - Stand Alone Complex, came about by sheer good luck. About four years ago I did a spot of design work for a Japanese game developer and music label called Frognation. I sent them a pile of stickers which got plastered everywhere including one of the guys lap top - that guy just happened to be a script editor at Production I.G. So, whilst working on early drafts for the TV series the director, Kenji Kamiyama, saw the laptop, liked the sticker designs and one thing led to another.

As a print company we had already been working with Wagamama producing their staff T-shirts. After a while, given the Japanese connection, we suggested coming up with some new designs for T-shirts.

DO YOU HAVE A DIFFERENT ATTITUDE OR APPROACH TO HOW YOU WORK ON THESE PROJECTS AS PROTOTYPE 21 FROM THE WORK YOU PRODUCE AS TERRATAG?

Not really. With contract work, like any designer, I listen to the brief and try to best interpret what the client wants. However Terratag, in many respects, is far more difficult as I am trying to condense a multiplicity of passions and cold-hard necessities into one project. Terratag has to be original and fresh, not complicated or up-its-own-arse, and most importantly, popular enough to pay the bills.

THIS YEAR TERRATAG RELEASED A NEW SERIES OF TEES CALLED 'CO-LABS', I UNDERSTAND THAT THIS SERIES CAME ABOUT THROUGH THE USE OF ONLINE COMMUNITY FOTOLOG.NET?

Towards the end of last year I was contacted by Proby who, having seen my postings on Fotolog, asked if I would like to come and paint at a graffiti jam he was organising in an abandoned warehouse. I wasn't sure what to expect and, having not painted for years, was a little apprehensive about being shown up. My piece was pretty shit but I had a great time and things have kinda mushroomed out from there.

After that first Jam, Proby set up the Cable Street Collective and continued to organise further graff hook-ups. At some early events I took along specially manufactured, half-size, silk screens and hand-printed T-shirts live. Sold exclusively at these events the set of 4 designs were titled Co-Lab Series 1. In August a further 4 designs were printed - a limited number being made available through the Terratag website sold out in two weeks

WHAT ARE THE FUTURE PLANS FOR TERRATAG

To continue drawing, designing and creating.

THANKS

I would like to thank paper, pencils, pens, markers, scalpels, sprays, computers, scanners and the multitude of materials that I have used, without whom my life would be empty.

www.terratag.com

www.fotolog.net/_terratag_

Whaam



Great Wave



Hunting Club



Takka Takka!



Leaping Hare



Godzilla



Kanji



Big G



2000

2001

2002

2003

21

PROTOTYPE 21: 02 2000 - 07 2000



TERRATAG
TERRATAG: 08:2002 - 07:2003



Bakuhatsu



Robo-Graff



Q Kanji



Hanabi



2004

2005



TERRATAG
TERRATAG: 08:2003 - 01:2005



TERRATAG
TERRATAG: 02:2005+

FREE STUFF

FOR A CHANCE TO WIN A TERRATAG TEE AND OTHER GOODIES, [CLICK HERE](#) AND SIGN UP TO THE MAILING LIST. IT'S THAT EASY

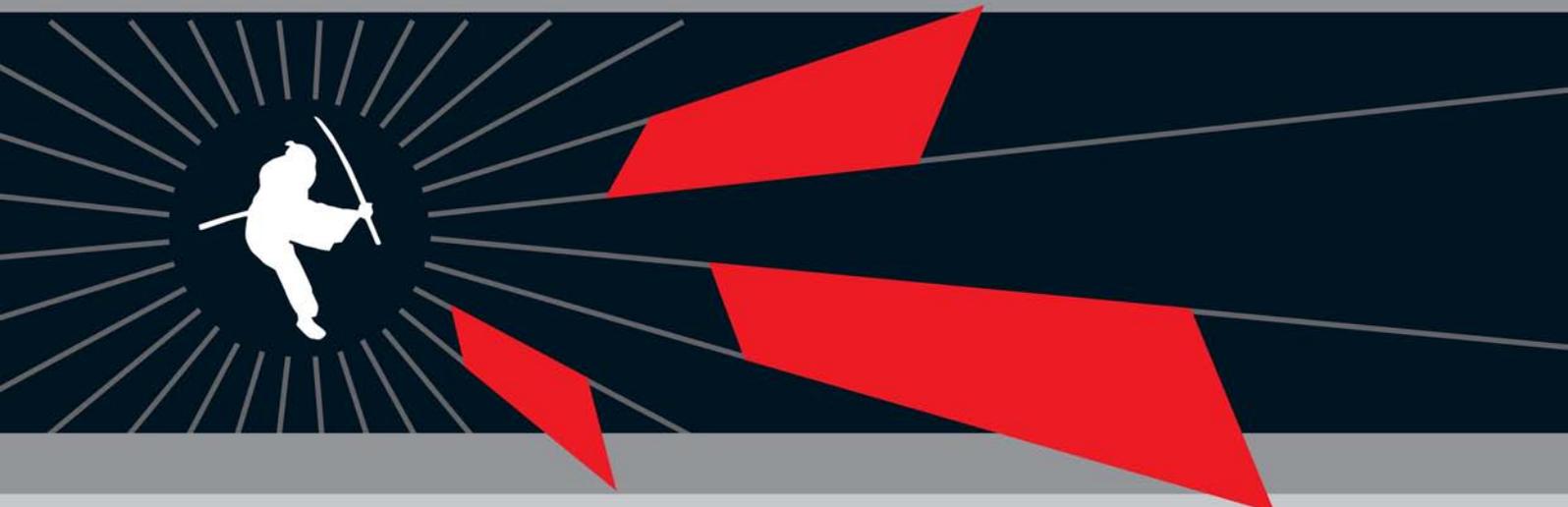


*Deaf Center
Pale Ravine*

*The majestic followup to the critically acclaimed 'Neon City EP'.
This is a romantic, theatrical work where each track tells part of a story
that slowly unfolds through the course of the record. Dark, involving
classical/electronic music for fans of Ryan Teague.
Max Richter and Murcof.*

Out november 2005 on Type records

Type



www.samurai.fm



NEW MUSIC RADIO

e s e m

Scateren

released by kahvi collective
www.kahvi.org



George Marinov had his first commercial release as esem in late 2001 on the now defunct Defocus label. The six track EP 'Ikae' provided an introduction to a sound that would return early the following year on the LP 'Enveloped'. Warm, synth driven melodies revolve slowly around the snap of kinetic drum patterns. Each track a well balanced combination of depth and precision. A second album 'Serial Human' followed in March of 2003, this time on Merck Records. Treading a darker path than its predecessors, its sharp percussion darts back and forth between menacing tones building each arrangement to an often dizzy intensity. The Merck installment conjures a significantly different atmosphere to earlier examples whilst undoubtedly bearing the mark of their creator.

In addition to the above, esem tracks and remixes have appeared on various commercially available releases but a large body of his work has found its audience via net labels like Kahvi and Monotonik.

It is through this increasingly popular route that George has delivered his new album 'Scateren' with the following comments...

"Scateren contains impulses, moments, snapshots, environments, interpretations, places to escape, ones i've been to, ones I long for, and ones I maybe just imagine; people i know, like, dislike, laughed with, hurt, was hurt by, fell in love with, ignored, met, followed.

In a way these 13 tracks are all scrambled. Some of them happened before the time they apply to. Others were perfect for their moment and remained good afterwards. One or two recreate a time long gone. They lack finish, polish, post production, decent mixing, mastering, etc, etc, etc. (etc.), all the things they say make a professional record. They are completely awash in reverb too. Oh and the ends are cut. I hope this will not prevent you from experiencing them, just as it did not stop me. I like them, and I am content to have them shared."

And on the subject of making the album available to download for free...

"I have mixed feelings towards the recording industry at this point. I do not particularly agree to the model and I do not exactly like the patterns. Go grab a Nano and hold it. Feel how things are becoming obsolete, much quicker than one can handle. I was offered to have these commercially released, but that is not something I would now be happy with.

Then there's the music vs money issue. Well I did not conceive the music with money in mind so why should you pay for it anyway? I, like you, enjoy a good freebie. So here's your treat. Grab Scateren, spread it, make a CD for your car and friends. (Don't charge or you will burn in hell.)

Plus, this way it will never run out of stock. It will never get dusty on your shelf. Or if you make and lose a CD, you can always recreate it from the files. And last, I don't think I kept the originals anyway. So, if you feel you're stuck with compressed audio, then tough."

Scateren is not officially LP3 (we still have that to look forward to on Merck) but it does provide some much appreciated new material and is without doubt a worthy addition to Georges catalogue so far. Anyone put off by the lack of physical product that downloading an album presents should make this their opportunity to reform and if you still can't be bothered to print and cut out the beautiful artwork that comes with this release then maybe you don't really deserve it anyway.

Scateren:
www.kahvi.org/94.php

Esem:
www.dot.cult.bg/esem/

Discogs:
www.discogs.com/artist/Esem

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Bloodwars
Online Graffiti Magazine



A winters tale

Story by: Mike Hirst

Sally was the happiest she'd been for a long time; Yes she was stressed, overworked and overtired, but all she could feel was the deep contentment felt only by those who are following their heart and setting off to achieve their lifelong goals. It was her last shift at the bakery, the last time she'd have to haul herself out of bed at an unearthly hour to spend hours slinging dough into a searingly hot oven followed by a generally pleasant period slinging the baked goods over the bakery's shop counter to the early-bird customers. She hated it, but had needed the money, needed to save up to travel to be with her love.

It was a strange relationship by conventional standards, and not one she talked about to most people; the few people she had plucked up the courage to confide in had invariably either tried to talk her out of it or (worse) simply dismissed her as being slightly unhinged. She'd already asked herself all the questions they usually did, of course. Yes it was weird flying out to start a new life with someone she'd never met, yes meeting and maintaining a long-distance relationship via the internet was an odd thing to do.. but above all Sally privately admitted to herself that, although she'd been blessed with many wonderful attributes, good looks were not amongst them. And she was 35, had never been married - had barely had a relationship; time was running out. If she was true to herself she'd admit that her flight to America was born out of hopelessness rather than hope, but such candour required more strength than even she had.

And so, with the true reasons for her departure hidden from all including herself, Sally carried on working out her final shift in a state of happy pre-occupation. The baking went well, passing in a blur of congratulations and toasts to her relocation and new life in America, and indeed the bulk of her shift in the shop passed smoothly, with Sally even receiving some leaving gifts from some of her customers. All went slightly awry, however, at almost eight in the morning - her finish time - when the most demanding of her regulars walked in.

She was a talker, which Sally liked being a chatty person herself. What she didn't like were the woman's topics of conversation (she only ever seemed to talk about what she saw on television, or the weather or something equally mundane; the woman just didn't seem to have a life) and the fact that her breath smelt abominably. In fact Sally and the others often vied to escape whenever they saw her approaching the store, engaging in a semi-comedic wrestling competition with the loser being the one who had to stay in the shop and serve her. Unfortunately for Sally, partly due to her lack of nimbleness but mainly due to her kind heart, which prevented her from trying to get away quite as earnestly as the others, she often lost the contest. Good wishes can only extend so far, and so it was that once again, on this day of all days she found herself abandoned and standing uneasily in front of the uncertain-looking woman.

The following events were to become legend (at least within the bakery). It could have been the cumulative effect of having to deal with this lady and her interminable conversations, the lack of sleep, the alcohol (Sally did not drink much at the best of times, let alone before dawn), or simply the fact that she was extremely tense - and certainly the fact that the lady was in an unusually talkative (and odorous) mood did not help - but Sally went much too far. Her co-workers would never forget the sound of Sally screaming at the woman to be silent, her rant about the womans' rank breath and the seemingly endless tirade insults, let alone the sight of Sally dragging the woman out of the shop by her hair and hurling an entire tray of baked goods all over her.

Needless to say, that was Sally's last act as an employee of the bakery. The shocked silence, broken only by the woman's pitiful sobs coming from the street outside, said all that was to be said. She didn't even linger long enough to gather her leaving gifts, she just marched away without a backwards look and made the short walk home to her empty house, crowning possibly the most spectacular moment in her entire life. It was the perfect moment; her flight was booked, her possessions were in transit - and she was quite certain she'd never return to England again. The only thing remaining in its place was her laptop which she'd saved till last so that she could stay in contact during her voyage to join him; he was her unshakable obsession and she couldn't resist going online, even though she had only minutes left before she had to set off to catch her flight.

She powered up, and immediately a little ping signified that there was an email waiting for her. Her heart started doing a little dance, until she saw the sender was a lady with a name she did not recognise; dismissing it as Spam, she angrily (still riled by the previous incident) deleted it and switched off her computer. Jake would have to wait...

Darren was a landscape gardener, and a pretty good one if making money, rather than customer satisfaction, was used as a measure of his success. He would have been the first to admit that his cheerful disposition earned him far more jobs than his limited gardening talents; and would have been no slower to embrace his friends' description of him as a "likeable rogue". There were signs, of course; his car was far more prestigious than one would expect of a landscape gardener, his attire was that of a country gent rather than his servant – yet he chose his clients carefully, selecting those who saw his appearance as a sign of respectability and honesty rather than those who narrowed their eyes in suspicion, and so was able to carry on in his ways unchecked.

He was on his way to number 53, Elm Street – his very favourite customer. She was one of those who very obviously paid him for his conversation rather than his improvements to her garden. She was one of the best, having lived alone in a big house bought with a fraction of her vast inheritance since her parents died in a terrible accident. She was extremely trusting, and often left him the keys to her house so that he could let himself in to make a cup of tea if she was away – which of course allowed him to pilfer himself additional payments via her unattended chequebook. Best of all – easily as good as the extra money – was the fact that she always took his insults as good humour. She was not elderly by any means, but seemed to completely miss the point and take his comments as a joke.

It wasn't that he hated her, as such, Darren mused as he let himself in, it was more that she bored him to the extent that he had to let off some steam occasionally. And it was fun! It was almost like a competition with himself, a challenge to see how far he

could go before she would pick up on the fact that he was genuinely insulting her – a challenge he'd never lost. Lost in his thoughts, Darren never heard the back door creak as he tore a few blank cheques out of her book, nor did he hear the click as it closed again. He replaced everything as it had been before and made his way back to the garden, completely unaware that Mrs Smith had been and gone.

Neil sniggered and looked for another rock. "You old freak!" he yelled. That was his phrase of the week – he changed it every week in term-time and every day in the holidays, and used the same one on anyone who crossed his path regardless of their appearance, although in fairness most people were old compared to the ten-year old. As usual this set off a symphony of guffaws from the rest of his friends, who were slumped alongside him outside the shopping centre – their usual hangout during the precious hours between school and dinnertime.

The lady ignored them, carried on walking towards the entrance seemingly with the weight of the world on her shoulders. "Ignore the ignorant" she chanted to herself almost like a mantra forcing herself onwards despite the fear making her want to turn back. She held her head high, which was ill-advised given the projectile hurtling in her direction.

"Old Freak!!" crowed Neil in triumph as his missile hit its' intended target "Old Freak!" As their laughter died down he turned to his friends and gestured for them to flee – even at his young age he'd developed a good sense of danger, and already knew that there would be repercussions. And so they ran, escaping the anguish they had caused and the danger they knew would follow, with their backs to the lady and her strangely contented smile.

Jane rubbed her head. She'd seen them before, of course; they regularly terrorised her local shops – but more importantly she knew where the ringleader lived. It was always the ringleader, she mused, the others were just following his lead – but at least with kids you can always go to their parents..

HE YELLED

HOPE YOU ENJOYED
PRETENDING AS
MUCH AS I DID

REVENGE WAS SO
MUCH MORE FUN,
AND SO EASY

TRYING
KE
THIS IS
PAYBACK
TIME

WHEN YOU HAVE
NO-ONE TO
ANSWER TO

HATED IT,
NEEDED
MONEY

THE LEPER

Mrs Smith made it back to her house late that day, sat down in her favourite armchair and looked out over the gardens. Darren, of course, had long gone though not without leaving several small signs of his passing; a few tidied up flower beds here, a moved hair on her chequebook there. It had been the usual kind of day, full of snubs and bustle, the sort that one couldn't take often without being affected. And Mrs Smith had been affected, badly affected – so much so that she'd had enough. She'd been preparing for this weekend for some time, had been looking forward to it in a warped kind of way. It was the weekend she'd leave her world behind and enter a more peaceful place, one where she would not be troubled by the problems she was plagued with now..

PC's Bryan and May entered the old house that Sunday afternoon, alerted by her gardener who had seen something through her window and decided to alert the police. He had no keys, he had explained, so couldn't check it out himself. Bryan and May privately agreed that he was trying to excuse his squeamishness, and this feeling was given weight by his sharp exit as soon as they came back outside, their faces grim.

It wasn't the dead body that had upset them so, it was the note it was holding, a epitaph so poignant, so reflective of modern society that even their hardened souls could not ignore it;

"The Leper

Living a life of torment
Her last breath was spent
Before it had even begun
Everyone needs someone

Every day was black
Her life's road a twisting track
No place for her in the sun
Everyone needs someone

Didn't have a conversation for years
No-one to talk to about her fears
She hadn't the patience of a nun
Everyone needs someone

Loneliness leaves no mark on the face
Rots you from the inside without a trace
Nowhere to hide, nowhere to run
Everyone needs someone

No-one cared, so no-one heard
No one saw the look which was as good as a word
Leaving a message only heeded when she was gone
Everyone needs someone"

The loneliness had clearly got to the poor woman, and in her passing she'd finally made someone care. Bryan and May took an equally distressed Darren's details down and awaited the people who must always do their analytical work, even in the most open and shut cases...

Sally was early for her flight, two whole hours early, and as she waited for 3pm to arrive she amused herself by passing a little time scrutinizing her fellow passengers who were the usual motley bunch of international travellers. "Particularly undistinguished", she frowned to herself, gazing at her own shop-fresh ensemble. Except for one, who could have almost been a young Joan Collins and was almost stately in the way she carried herself. She looked almost familiar, in the way a minor actress would do. Suddenly meek she dropped her eyes and began fumbling for her ever-present laptop; she'd re-read some of Jakes old emails to her to pass the time.

3pm; it started at the exact moment that Neil and his dad sat down to watch the match. An ear-shattering roar shook the house, a banshee-like howling filling any gaps between the decibels, a noise so loud that it was actually painful. Slamming his beer down, Bob raged out of his house, his son scurrying after him like a feral rat, and pounded on the door of the new tenants next door. As it opened he drew himself up to his full tattooed height, raised his fists and drew back his teeth in a primeval snarl: they were going to pay..

A shadow loomed over him. "Bob?" growled the man mountain. "Barry" it stated. Bob shrank

"This is payback time. Your son has been terrorising the neighbourhoods round here for too long, and you've done nothing except for encourage him. It's just not right. Someone's paid me to teach you a lesson, and here's how. You're going to get a day of this for every time your son has sworn at people, and a day of this for every stone he's thrown at people. A day for every theft. A day for every piece of vandalism. I've got a long lease on this property, Bob, and so you're going to find out just how bad your son has been."

Barry leant forward, looming over the smaller man. "And you're not going to move away. And you're not going to complain to anyone about the noise. And you're not going to be violent towards Neil – there are other ways of bringing him into line. Are you?" Shaking his head, Bob turned slowly to his son, who appeared to have wet himself.

Jane Smith settled into her seat and sighed contentedly. She'd particularly wanted to be on the same flight as Sally – it suited her purposes as she was fleeing the country herself, but more importantly it enabled her to see Sally's reaction to her little piece of revenge. It wasn't that she hated her particularly, although Sally's smiling hypocrisy had riled her even more than the others' more obvious repulsion, it was just that she was an easy target. And, more pertinently she'd come into contact with Jane and her soulless life more than most, so was being used, and punished, by Jane as a symbol of all society, along with her crooked gardener and the gang of local young hoodlums. The altercation with Sally three days ago was pure (and very fortunate from Jane's point of view) coincidence – her plans had been laid long before. Unfair? Life was unfair, Jane giggled to herself. It was her turn, for too long she had born the brunt of peoples' unfairness, and now it was Sally's turn. It had been an easy matter to find out about Sally's penchant for internet chatrooms, and just as easy for her to make up an identity and "meet" her in one. Jane silently pressed "send" and waited to witness the concluding chapter of Sally's great "romance".

The computer binged twice. Two emails at once! Could it be? Sally's heart did a little dance again. It was! Well, two emails, one from him and one from what looked like the police. How strange, well it couldn't affect her now she thought as she opened his email. And then closed it hastily only to reopen it. It couldn't be, it had to be fake! "I'm not who you thought I was, surprise" read the text accompanying the confirming photo "hope you enjoyed pretending as much as I did! Oh and read the other email". Strangling a sob she obeyed, feeling giddy as it told how the police wanted to question her. Something about witnesses describing a fight with a lady in her shop on Friday, the lady's subsequent untimely death which had occurred on that very night (she'd apparently laid undiscovered for a couple of days until her gardener had found her), which at first had looked like suicide. The email went on to say that the police had discovered that Mrs Smith's will had been changed in Sally's favour shortly after the old lady's death and went on to advise, in appallingly clinical terms, that officers were awaiting her arrival in America, and that she was to be held in the custody of the airplane's cabin staff for the remainder of her flight. Faintness overcame her, it was too much, everything was disappearing before her eyes, she was ruined...

And inside, as she feigned sleep amongst the commotion surrounding the prone young woman, Jane Smith laughed and laughed. She nearly had gone through with it, nearly had ended it all during those dark days at the start of the year. The note had been as real as her intentions, but at the last possible second she'd hesitated, reconsidered, and stepped back from the abyss. Revenge was so much more fun, and so easy when you have no-one to answer to and a virtually limitless supply of cash; even finding an anonymous body to plant in her house had not been too tough, and after all she had no relatives or even friends, so there was no-one to confirm her identity. Indeed she knew that no-one would have a clear description of her due to her isolation and the fact that when she did go out she habitually wore many layers of clothes, using them as a protective layer between herself and society. The careful preparation of the "evidence" had almost seemed like fun, like prop preparation for a play she would never see – but she would certainly listen out for the reviews. Leaving a small amount of money in her bank account to "bequeath" to Sally had not caused her any problems either, she held her real money in offshore bank accounts ready to access in the name of her new identity.

Her thoughts turned briefly to Darren, who was the easiest to work out and so the easiest to frame. She'd known what he was up to for a while, of course, had in fact just been lulling him into a sense of false security. Darren, she knew, was just a simple thief - and all thieves are greedy: this, she knew, would be his downfall. She knew that he wouldn't have been able to resist buying something or other the day after he'd done her lawn – the day after she'd "died". This alone would have been enough to alert the police and land him in a whole lot of trouble, even if the police did not find the multiple emails he'd "written" to Sally from Jane's email account. Sally had only ever thought she had one online boyfriend you see – spam filters can be so harmful sometimes! In any case, Jane reflected, he was either going to be framed for her murder or his whole sordid pensioner-robbing past was going to come to light – and that was nothing less than he deserved.

She closed her eyes for real as Sally walked unsteadily past her seat flanked by several earnest-looking flight attendants, looking forward to her new life: a life where no-one would dare mess with her. And far below, as she fell into the peaceful sleep of those who are finally following their dreams, Bob's screams mingled with the recorded ones coming from next door; a howling promise to his fellow townspeople that he and his kin would never wake them from theirs again.

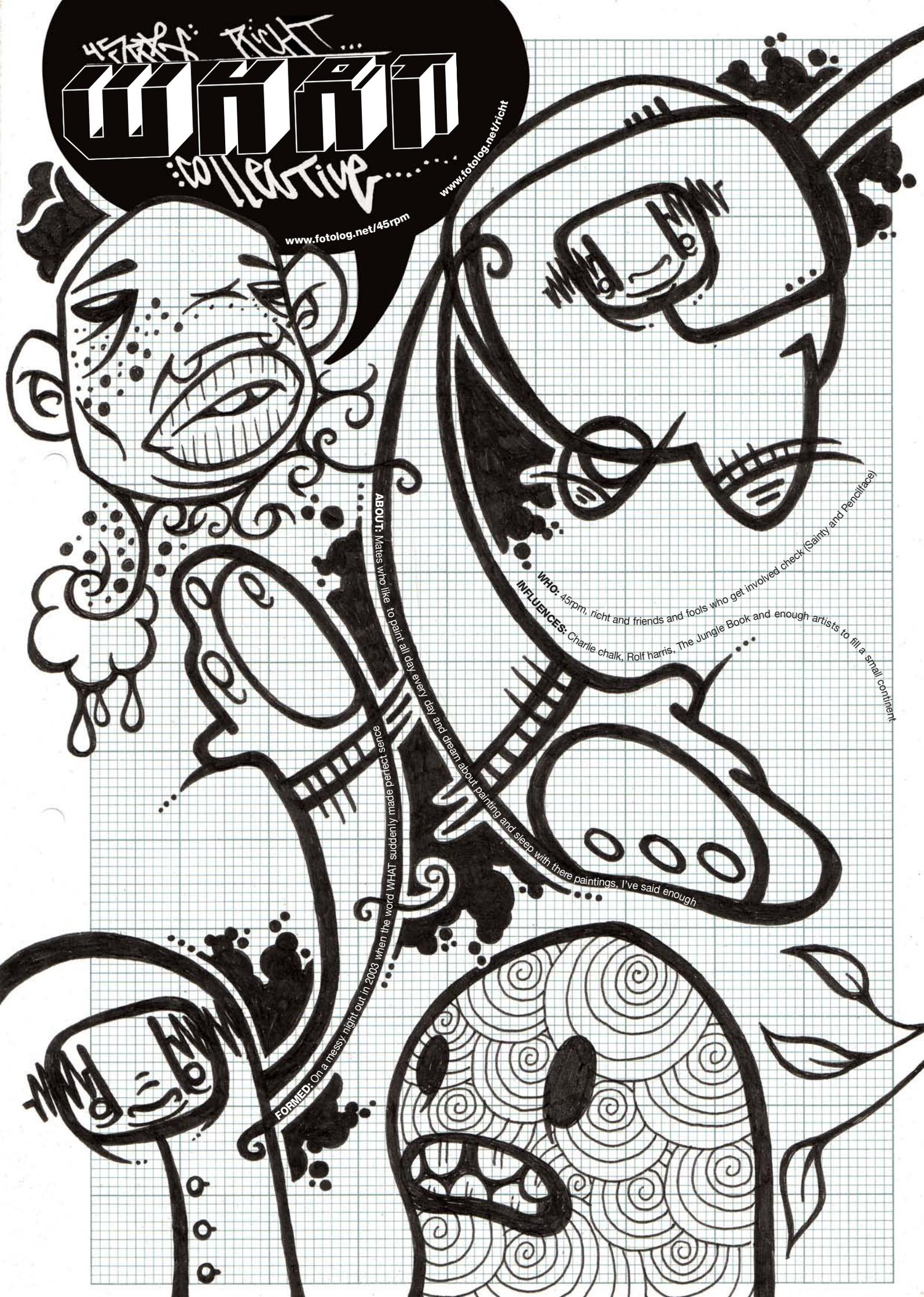
The End

45rpm: Right... WHAO

COLLECTIVE

www.fotolog.net/45rpm

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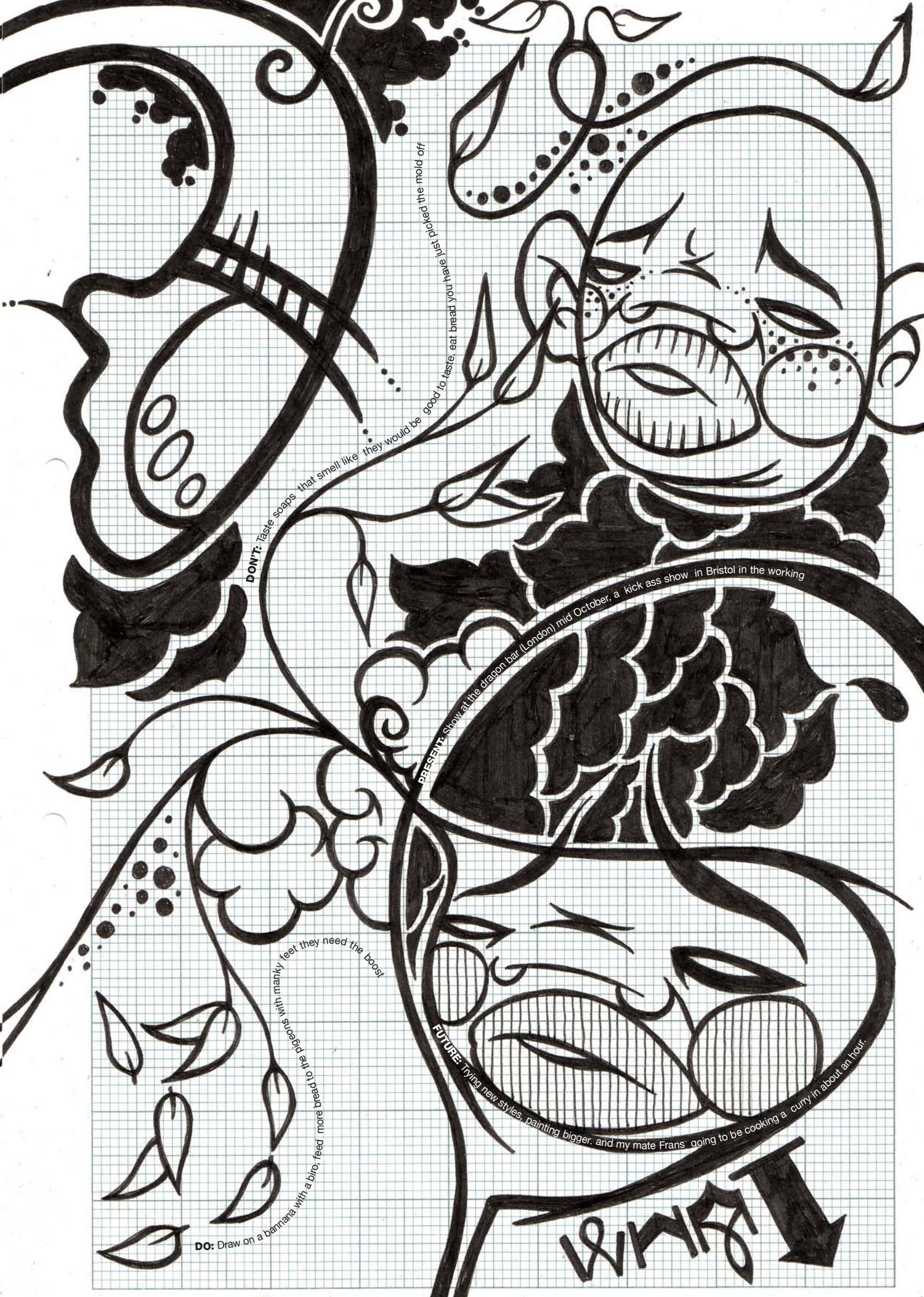


ABOUT: Mates who like to paint all day every day and dream about painting and sleep with their paintings. I've said enough

WHO: 45rpm, right and friends and fools who get involved check (Saimy and Penciltracey)

INFLUENCES: Charlie Chalk, Rolf Harris, The Jungle Book and enough artists to fill a small continent

FORMED: On a messy night out in 2003 when the word WHA? suddenly made perfect sense



DO: Draw on a banana with a biro, feed more bread to the pigs with manky, feet they need the boost

DON'T: Taste soaps that smell like they would be good to taste, eat bread you have licked the mold off

PRESENT: Show at the dragon bar (London) mid October, a kick ass show in Bristol in the working

FUTURE: Trying new styles, painting bigger, and my mate Frans going to be cooking a curry in about an hour.

WIKI ↓

**BYE
THEN!**



SEE YOU NEXT TIME...